

further underscores this irrational judgment by the DHS. Not only is DHS taking money away from the Nation's largest and most populated city, while another recent terror plot against New York came to light just last week, but its antiterrorism database listed the States of Indiana and Wisconsin with more potential terrorist targets than New York.

This New Yorker finds it painfully ironic that the DHS said that one of the reasons for the cut in funding is our lack of landmarks necessary to protect New York. Well, if that statement is not illogical enough, consider this. Among the items in its National Asset Database that the DHS does find necessary are a petting zoo in Alabama, a popcorn factory in Indiana, and Mule Day. And here is a picture of the Mule Day Parade in Tennessee.

As a New Yorker, it is certainly fair to question the rationale for our funding reduction if these are the priorities in other States which are receiving New York's money instead.

#### VOTING RIGHTS ACT

(Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, over 51 years ago this month, President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act. America is a better country because of the Voting Rights Act.

The right to vote is the most fundamental thing our American citizens have to participate fully in American democracy. The Voting Rights Act is our Nation's most crucial and critical civil rights victory. The law commemorates the lives of those who marched, died and participated that we all might be better Americans and live and vote in the democracy that we love.

It is important today, as we debate the Voting Rights Act, that America pay particular attention. This law was good then, this law is good now, and it is needed for our future so that Americans might rise up and live in God's best interest.

Remember, today, urge your colleagues, call your Congressperson, tell them to vote to reauthorize the Voting Rights Act for 25 more years.

#### COMPETITION LOWERS HEALTH CARE COSTS

(Mr. MURPHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, did you know that a 25-year-old male in good health can purchase a policy for health insurance for \$960 in Kentucky and the same policy costs about \$5,800 in New Jersey? Did you know that a policy priced at \$1,600 in Iowa is \$2,600 in Washington State? And did you know

that that same policy costs about \$4,000 in Massachusetts?

One reason for this disparity is that families have little or no choice when it comes to selecting health care insurance. Where there is no competition, there is very little that drives cost down. Each State has its own health insurance mandates, and some of them are good, but there are about 1,800 of them all across the Nation, including provisions for acupuncturists, massage therapists, and hair replacements.

Many of these mandates may be helpful, but when you add up the cost, they can put health care out of the reach of families. Congress should establish a trial program allowing consumers and families to purchase health insurance policies from other States. Let us give families a choice instead of more costs.

I urge my colleagues to learn more about competition in health insurance by looking at my Web site at [Murphy.house.gov](http://Murphy.house.gov). America needs us to go to work on this.

#### U.S. PEACE AND DIPLOMACY

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, nearly 4 years ago, this administration came before us and promoted their idea of peace and democracy in the Middle East. Their vehicle for accomplishing this? A unilateral first strike against Iraq and the subsequent occupation.

Let us reflect on this policy this morning. In Iraq, over 2,500 American soldiers have died, tens of thousands injured, over 100,000 innocent Iraqi civilians killed, and countless injured. We are mired in a civil war there, and violence is growing every day.

In Iran, international efforts at diplomacy have been undermined by our Iraq policy. This administration seems determined to repeat the disaster of Iraq in Iran, most recently by trying to link Iran to the attacks on Israel.

As a broader regional war breaks out between Israel and Lebanon, spurred on by Hezbollah, instead of trying to find ways to end the conflict by rescuing negotiations between the Palestinians and Israel, this administration, which has an unfortunate talent for war, is making statements which will contribute to escalation.

Israel urgently needs diplomatic assistance. The only way the U.S. can reclaim its role as a mediator is to speak and act like a mediator. You can bomb the world to pieces, but you can't bomb the world to peace.

#### LONE STAR VOICE: MARIBETH BURGESS RAY

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, our individual heritage of the past is important, but

our future as Americans is more important. Many Americans trace their past through Ellis Island. Mrs. Maribeth Burgess Ray of Baytown, Texas, recently went there, and she says:

"While at Ellis Island, I found a profound statement. An article had a picture of a mother and her two sons. The newcomers' attire was that of the country from which they had fled. The statement was, 'If the ones who flee do not change their appearance and speech, they only bring what they fled from to America, thus changing America into the country that they were fleeing from.'"

Today, we forget what America is and what it stands for. If what you are fleeing from is so bad, leave it behind and adapt to what it is you are looking for. Let us keep America America, with the beautiful quilt of immigrants that make it up, but let us not turn America into something it is not. Don't let our borders be penetrated by the baggage that some refuse to leave behind.

Mr. Speaker, people who come to America should assimilate and just become Americans.

And that's just the way it is.

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#### MULTILINGUAL BALLOTS

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, when I was born, my grandparents could not express themselves in the constitutional right to vote. Today we have an opportunity to affirm the very basic values of America, and that is to reaffirm every American's right to vote without barrier or bar.

And so I rise to explain the King amendment which has given the wrong impression, and that is the amendment that would eliminate multilingual ballots for citizens. I ask my good friend what he would do for the young soldier who is an immigrant, who is a legal permanent resident and has offered his life in battle in Iraq and Afghanistan and who has managed to make legal permanent residents and then citizens of his own family who have a language barrier because of just recently coming to this country, maybe conversant enough to become citizens, but not enough to read a ballot.

This amendment is unconstitutional and un-American, and I hope that we will together, Republicans and Democrats, uphold the values of America.

#### SICK ATTEMPT TO RAISE CAMPAIGN CASH

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, politics unfortunately, can be

a very tough business, and the low road is often taken by political adversaries in an effort to gain power.

But the video released by the Democratic Campaign Committee hit a new low. This cynical attempt to raise campaign cash actually uses photographs of those who made the ultimate sacrifice. It shows photos of coffins draped with the American flag. Those coffins, of course, are occupied by American soldiers.

Mr. Speaker, our incredibly brave men and women in uniform did not make the ultimate sacrifice so that the DCCC could raise campaign cash. They made that sacrifice in defense of freedom and liberty and democracy. The Democratic leadership should be ashamed, and every Democratic Member of this House should be ashamed and call upon their leadership to remove this video which is an affront to our fallen soldiers and to their families.

It is appalling that the Democrats have sunk to such a new low as to employ doctored photos and tasteless videos in their pursuit of power. The American people and our fallen heroes deserve more.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2872. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of Louis Braille.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed concurrent resolutions of the following titles in which concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 96. Concurrent resolution to commemorate, celebrate, and reaffirm the national motto of the United States on the 50th anniversary of its formal adoption.

S. Con. Res. 108. Concurrent resolution authorizing the printing of a revised edition of a pocket version of the United States Constitution, and other publications.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 9, FANNIE LOU HAMER, ROSA PARKS, AND CORETTA SCOTT KING VOTING RIGHTS ACT REAUTHORIZATION AND AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2006

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 910 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

#### H. RES. 910

*Resolved*, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 9) to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the

bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed 90 minutes equally divided and controlled by the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader or their designees. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the rule provides 90 minutes of general debate, evenly divided and controlled by the chairman and the ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary, and it also provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is appropriate to begin by quoting the 15th amendment to the United States Constitution: "The rights of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude."

As enshrined by the 15th amendment, there really is no more fundamental right in our democratic system than the right to vote. However, the history of the United States is marked with occasions where minorities were in multiple ways, and by multiple ways,

blocked from having their voices heard at the ballot box.

One of the great advancements in our American democracy was and is the Voting Rights Act. This historic legislation was the first comprehensive Federal statute to enforce minorities' constitutional right to vote. The provisions of the 1965 Voting Rights Act provided swift relief to those citizens who were victims of discriminatory voting tactics and provided them access in a concrete and effective way to the voting booth.

Since it was enacted, the Voting Rights Act has enfranchised millions of racial, ethnic, and language minority citizens to have access to that sacred right that is voting by breaking down barriers and permitting increased minority participation in elections for candidates at all levels of government.

After 41 years of breaking down walls, walls to participation in our democratic process, the Voting Rights Act would soon expire if not reauthorized. With this in mind, the Committee on the Judiciary began hearings to determine whether the legislation is still needed. The committee held 12 hearings on the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act, listening to testimony from State and local elected officials, scholars, lawyers, representatives from the voting and civil rights communities. The testimony and evidence presented before the committee brought to light the fact that even though we have made great strides to stop the discriminatory practices of the past, there still is ample evidence that minorities today face discriminatory practices at the ballot box.

Mr. Speaker, in my community for decades we saw the voting power of minorities diluted to the point that they were for many years unable to elect the representatives of their preference. The Voting Rights Act helped correct that wrong, helped enfranchise countless citizens into our democratic political system. The underlying legislation will reauthorize the expiring provisions of the Voting Rights Act for 25 years.

I would like to point out one provision which I think is very important, especially to my community, as well as communities throughout the country. The bill extends section 203, the existing language assistance requirements that provide that election materials be provided in select languages in covered jurisdictions. These provisions of the Voting Rights Act require that non-English voting materials be made available in jurisdictions where 5 percent of the citizen voting age population consists of a single language, limited English proficient minority and in which there is a literacy rate below the national average, or more than 10,000 citizens who meet those criteria reside. These provisions, brought out in the hearings, cover approximately 12 percent of the counties in the United States. It certainly has benefited the counties that I am honored to represent.